

Minutes
Public Transportation Committee
4/8/09

Present: Alex Ghiselin, Jim Nash, John Norton, Leslie Stein, David Elvin from PVPC,
Jamin Carroll from VATCO, and Laura Hanson from DPW

Public Comment: none

Minutes of 3/11/09 were approved with one correction in comments by James Lowenthal on page 2, which noted curb cuts being blocked. The intersection is Henshaw and Crenshaw, rather than Crescent and Crenshaw.

Progress on bus stops and signage: Jamin Carroll reported that now that spring has arrived they are working with DPW to get some of the signs installed.

Continued Discussion of Transportation Policies: The committee reviewed their last meeting with other members of the community to discuss snow removal. Jim Nash summarized the results and reminded members of the actions we agreed upon, i.e., adopt a shelter ideas and contacting the BID once it is established. Jim also suggested developing an ongoing subcommittee to work on this issue and the committee agreed that Leslie Stein would report these efforts to the Parking and Transportation Commission. Alex Ghiselin offered to draft a letter thanking Michael Bolles for their efforts this past winter. And Laura Hanson also plans to contact them again to ask about next season.

Posting of committee minutes on city web site and goggle group or blog: Alex Ghiselin reported that we are now able to post the committee's minutes on the Public Transportation Committee section of the Parking and Transportation page of the city's website. <http://www.northamptonma.gov/tpc/transit>. The page already has a link to the PVTa. Laura Hanson suggested putting up links to other public transportation sites. Once the meeting minutes are drafted Alex will post them and then make any needed changes after they are reviewed at the next meeting. Alex also wants to set up a blog around public transit issues.

PVTa Public Hearing: Wednesday May 13 from 5 to 7 PM at the Bangs Center in Amherst an open-house style event to hear rider's thoughts and ideas about fixed routes. Mary MacInnes and Nicole Rohan will be there. David Elvin said that PVTa hopes to do this twice a year. Committee members agreed that it was important for them to attend and agreed to cancel their monthly meeting in May as it is at the same time. Leslie Stein will notify Wendy Maza of the cancellation.

Old Business: Jim Nash commented that the Rt. 42 to Williamsburg is still not running on time in the morning. Jamin Carroll said they are looking at some changes.

The committee discussed the funds that would maintain the expansion of the Rt. 44 in the coming fiscal year. PVPC will be taking solicitations for the Freedom funds again and PVRTA may apply again for the 44. The data shows ridership on the extension to the jail but limited ridership on Ryan Road. PVRTA plans to mail a postcard to residents within on half mile of that extension to remind them of the availability. There was some discussion of dividing the route and questions about the need for transportation for children to the Ryan Road School given the proposed cuts in school transportation for next year. Leslie will forward some of the data to the committee that she received from Nicole Rohan at PVRTA.

New Business: The next meeting of the Northampton/Hadley/Amherst Route 9 Transportation Stakeholders Group is scheduled for:

Friday, June 12 from 8:00 to 9:30 AM

Hadley Senior Center, 46 Middle Street (northeast corner of Routes 9 and 47 next to Hadley Public Library)

Senator Rosenberg is scheduled to provide an update on transportation legislation, and agency representatives will give brief reports on key projects in the corridor. Notes from the Dec. 1, 2008 meeting and a draft agenda will be distributed 1-2 weeks prior to June 12. For questions, please contact: David Elvin, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission delvin@pvpc.org
(413) 781-6045 x327

There was a discussion of a bus stop and parking study of downtown Springfield completed by the PVPC. David Elvin had presented it on 4/8/09 to the PVRTA and Laura Hanson had also heard him present it another forum. She asked if he would present it to this committee at our next meeting in June.

Leslie Stein suggested that there are enough riders at the Masonic street bus stop across from the Academy to warrant a shelter, which would also address the complaint that riders are blocking doorways and dropping trash. Jamin Carroll will look into the possibility.